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Chicago's Best Holiday Light Displays

By [Patricia Batson](#) | Yahoo! Contributor Network – [Sat, Dec 15, 2012](#)

Christmas brings twinkling lights, candy canes, toys, festive trees, beautiful angels, Santa and his reindeer, and other holiday favorites to the Windy City streets. There are so many decorations to see and enjoy around Chicago's neighborhoods, including these very special Christmas light displays.

Lights of Illinois in West Chicago

College of DuPage student Zachary Gebis, 19, who will soon transfer to a university in pursuit of an MBA degree, has designed an elegant lighting masterpiece on the 27W block of Timber Lane in West Chicago, Illinois.



The display, which runs from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. nightly, rain or shine, is a must-see. Gebis, a self-described "computer nerd" most enjoys seeing the kids' reactions. "I recently was taking photographs of the display, when two kids drove past the display and didn't see me and said in unison, "It's so pretty!" That made my efforts worth it."

Gebis' impressive presentation, which takes a few days to complete and one day to take down, is the result of over 100 hours of programming, offering guests a 10-minute light show.

Gebis said the environmentally friendly display has "thousands of LED lights and draws very little power compared to others using the old incandescent lights. [Visitors] are also welcome to scan the QR barcode with their cell phone at the front of the display and use the live webcam to take pictures of themselves from the display." Neighbors are impressed, including the local sheriff's department, which stopped by to admire the seasonal creation. Gebis also designed the website www.lightsofillinois.com with a streaming webcam.

A Beautiful Jahn Christmas Tradition

27-year-old entrepreneur and Web developer Tim Jahn is the creative force behind the home in the 6900 block of West Farragut Avenue in Chicago. The display can be seen nightly between the hours of 5 p.m. and 9 p.m.



[Carol Of The Bells \(from Jahn Christmas 2012\)](#) from [Tim Jahn](#) on [Vimeo](#).

Jahn, whose goal is for his home to become a yearly family tradition, shared a few of the highlights of his winter wonderland. "The display features over 5,500 lights, 25 candy canes, 13 mini-trees, and over 3,000 feet of lights. You can expect to be dancing and singing along to songs from Neil Diamond, The Polar Express, Tran-Siberian Orchestra, Mariah Carey, and lots more!"

"I love seeing cars pull up and sit there for a half-hour as they watch the magic of the lights dancing to their favorite Christmas songs. Many people walked by the display during setup this year and asked if this was going to be like the Griswolds' house from 'Christmas Vacation,'" said Jahn.

You can find out more at www.JahnChristmas.com and enjoy another video of Tim Jahn's Christmas home display: "[Hot Chocolate](#)" from [The Polar Express](#).

Logan Square's Festive Christmas

"Christmas House," located on West Logan Boulevard and Washtenaw and owned by Frank Lopez in Chicago's Logan Square community, has been a beloved institution for more than 25 years.

The visually extraordinary display features thousands of lights; Santa and his reindeer flying on the rooftop; holiday music; Christmas trees; a smiling, bell-ringing Bugs Bunny dressed in a Santa suit; angels; and a spinning carousel with teddy bears taking a festive ride.

Lopez's next-door neighbor, Colin Beckett, said the setup for the mind-blowing creation begins with a crew that starts setting up right after Halloween. "People come by all the time. Basically, once they start lighting it up, everybody comes by to take pictures in front of it. It's a great thing to see -- it plays music, there's a lot of stuff all over the place. It's a lot of fun for everyone around here," said Beckett.

Beauty and Heart in Des Plaines, Illinois

A northwest suburban resident beautifully combines creative artistry with a heart for helping others this holiday season.

The magical presentation on the 1700 block of Wicke Street in Des Plaines includes a giant Christmas tree; hundreds of lights; a hologram Santa Claus; beloved characters Rudolph, Minnie Mouse, Charlie Brown, Snoopy, and Winnie the Pooh; and streaming holiday music that can be enjoyed in comfort by tuning the car radio to 107.1. Outside the property is a free-will donation box where visitors can drop off canned goods that will be distributed to an area food pantry.

Vicki Borgman, 43, of Des Plaines, Illinois, along with her husband Steve and children David and Sarah, discovered a new favorite neighborhood home that will become a family tradition.

"Since hearing about it two weeks ago, we have been by there four times with the kids and their friends. It will definitely be a tradition. I was surprised -- this man comes out of his house and gives everyone in the car a candy cane, gives his holiday greetings, and goes back inside his house. My favorite part is the free-will food pantry donation. It puts in perspective where this person's heart is. He likes to give an amazing light show to the public and remind people to give to those in need. It just makes the whole visit sweeter," said Borgman.

A Lighting Designer's Christmas Passion

[Nick Diaz](#), a 20-year old lighting designer and California Institute of the Arts student, decorates his family's home on the 8000 block of West 107th Street in Palos Hills, Illinois

The highlight of Diaz's delightful display are the lights that perform to selected musical numbers daily from dusk until 9 p.m. (10 p.m. on

weekends).

"Our 2012 display is a product of a 20-year tradition started by my late Aunt Beverly. I credit her for my current passion for light and my career choice. As one can imagine, setting up most of the display is a team effort in which the entire family participates. The initial goal was to share memories within our family. However, now, our goal is to create a cheerful and magical immersive environment in which other families can make memories of their own. We're very thankful to be able to light up our little section of the city every year, and we hope that we inspire others to do the same," said Diaz.

Honorable Mention: A Chicago Favorite

Along with these remarkable works of Christmas wonder, a decades-long Chicago favorite, the Sauganash/Edgebrook/Lincolnwood area, has beautiful homes decked out for the holiday, featuring Christmas trees, elves, Santa, dancing toys, twinkling lights, and the infamous three-story tree that appears to pop through the roof of one residence. Visitors can find all the seasonal fun between Devon, Pratt, Central, and the Edens Expressway (I-94).

[Click for a photo slideshow with music](#) featuring all the homes mentioned in this article.

Merry Christmas!

Patricia Batson is a Chicago resident who has worked as a background extra in Hollywood, California, and Chicago, Illinois, in television and film productions "Boss," "Shameless," "The Chicago Code," "Glee," "Grey's Anatomy," "Contagion," "The Dilemma," and "Get Him to the Greek." In addition, her resume includes local ad agencies and TV and radio stations.

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